



EXHIBIT 9
DATE 1/18/07
HB 189

Montana Audubon

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Testimony on HB 189
House Appropriations Committee
January 18, 2007

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

My name is Janet Ellis and I'm here today representing Montana Audubon.

Montana Audubon supports HB 189. The Cline Mining Corporation is planning to develop an open-pit coal mine just north of the Montana-British Columbia border on the North Fork of the Flathead River. The mine is expected to operate approximately 20 years. Many individual are concerned about how this mine will impact water conditions in the Flathead Valley.

There is the potential for runoff into the North Fork of the Flathead River and ultimately Flathead Lake. Coal mining brings with it the potential for toxic heavy metals on other pollutants which could harm the North Fork's nearly pristine fishery.

This bill has the ability to help protect the water quality of the North Fork of the Flathead, the Flathead River, and—ultimately—Flathead Lake. Obtaining baseline water quality information will be important to understand how to protect this important Montana resource.

Chapters:

Bitterroot
Bitterroot Valley

Five Valleys
Missoula

Flathead
KalisPELL

Last Chance
Helena

Mission Mountain
Polson

Pintlar
Butte • Dillon

Rosebud
Miles City

Sacajawea
Bozeman

Upper Missouri Breaks
Great Falls

Yellowstone Valley
Billings